

Preliminary Proposed Action

TRAILS (All miles listed are approximate)

➤ **Total: 51 miles**

Non-motorized: 42 miles

- Construct new trail: 36 miles
- Improve existing user-created trail: 2 miles
- Improve old Hwy 40 and designate as non-motorized trail: 4 miles

Motorized/multi-use: 9 miles

- Construct new OHV/multi-use trail: 5 miles
- Improve old route/road and designate as OHV/multi-use: 4 miles

Other Route Changes

- Remove and re-naturalize user-created trails: Approximately 20 miles of trail are currently identified. Continue to monitor for and close new user-created trails.

INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGES

- Hot Springs Trailhead would be removed; Forest Service would collaborate with the Strawberry Park Hot Springs on signs and information boards denoting access/easement across Strawberry Park Hot Springs property and provide information for Forest Service visitors to use the Lower Bear Trailhead (TH).
- Lower Bear TH: Increase capacity and improve traffic flow; install restroom.
- Ferndale Day Use Area would be reopened as a summer trailhead, and a restroom and information kiosk would be constructed; the loop road would be reconfigured into a parking area (estimate of 20 parking places). Re-establish as a fee Day Use Area.
- The planned NFSR 296.1 winter parking area would be designated as a year-round trailhead, and a restroom and information kiosk would be constructed.
- An existing small pull-off on Hwy 40 between Ferndale and Rabbit Ears West Summit area, where old Hwy 40 (NFSR 299) and existing Hwy 40 intersect, would be designated as a summer trail access point.
- Existing trailheads would be altered as follows: Bruce's Trail and Fox Curve winter trailheads would be designated as year-round trailheads without toilet facilities; Dumont and Muddy Creek winter trailheads would be designated as year-round trailheads; Rabbit Ears parking area would be designated as a summer trailhead, and a restroom and information kiosk would be constructed.

OTHER MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- Restricted Use Area designation would restrict wheeled vehicle use on Forest Service land to designated routes within an area of approximately 88,000 acres (excludes the existing Buffalo Pass Restricted Use Area and the Steamboat Ski Area). The boundary would not extend onto the Yampa Ranger District.
- Two site-specific Forest Plan amendments would be required:

- The 0.02 mile long existing user-created trail to Rabbit Ears Peak would require an amendment in order to be improved and designated as a Forest Service trail. Management Area 3.31 Backcountry Recreation - Year-Round Motorized, Transportation Standard 2 states “Do not allow new road and trail construction” (LRMP p. 2-29). Establishing this trail would provide safe access to a frequently visited point of interest.
- The proposed 2.4 mile long Grizzly-Helena connector trail would require an amendment in order to be re-establish an historic motorized route. The proposed route would be in Management Area 1.32 Backcountry Recreation Non-Motorized with Winter Limited Motorized, which prohibits all summer motorized use per Infrastructure Travelway Standard 3 states “Prohibit all summer motorized use in Management Areas 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 1.32, 2.2, and 8.22” (LRMP p. 1-23). This segment would enable a continuous north-south route approximately 70 miles long, that also creates other connections.
- Commercial special use permits would be issued to provide shuttles to trailheads; this would improve access and reduce traffic congestion. Areas for consideration include the following trailheads: Mad Creek, Lower Bear, Dry Lake, Buffalo Pass, West Summit of Rabbit Ears, Dumont Lake, and Muddy Creek.
- Commercial special use permits outfitting/guiding and recreation events on trails would be established, identifying allowable areas and thresholds for use.
- Where specified, seasonal timing restrictions would be placed on certain trails for protection of resources, for example to protect wildlife during critical times, and to protect trail resources from erosion and impacts during wet weather.